

**The original documents are located in Box 19, “11/3/75 - American Indian Center Dinner, Chicago, Illinois” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

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VIDEO TAPE (TO BE MADE NOVEMBER 3)

AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER DINNER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

NOVEMBER 12, 1975

MR. JOURDAN (JORDAN), MRS. DECORAH (DECK-OR-AH),

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR HONORING ME WITH THE  
SILVER EAGLE FEATHER AWARD. I AM ONLY SORRY I COULDN'T  
BE WITH YOU IN CHICAGO TO ACCEPT IT IN PERSON.

1975 MARKS THE 20TH YEAR OF SERVICE FOR THE  
AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER AND THIS ANNUAL DINNER IS THE  
MAJOR FUND-RAISING EVENT FOR THE CENTER. I COMMEND  
THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND ALL THE OTHERS WHO ARE SUPPORTING  
THE CENTER'S GOOD WORK.

THE AMERICAN INDIAN POPULATION HAS SHIFTED IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS -- NOT BECAUSE ENTIRE TRIBES HAVE MOVED, BUT BECAUSE MANY INDIVIDUALS HAVE MOVED FROM RURAL AREAS TO THE CITY. THE RESULT IS THAT, TODAY, THE MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLE LIVE IN CITIES.

THE TRANSITION TO CITY LIFE IS DIFFICULT. SUCH  
SETTLEMENT HOUSES AS THE AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER OF CHICAGO  
HELP CUSHION THE SEVERE CULTURAL SHOCK AND PREPARE THE  
INDIAN PEOPLE FOR MEANINGFUL LIVES IN THE CITY.

IT IS PARTICULARLY REFRESHING TO ME THAT SUCH AGENCIES AS THE AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER OF CHICAGO RELY ON SELF-HELP TO HANDLE THEIR PROBLEMS. AS WITH ANY MINORITY GROUP IN THE CITY, THE AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLE FACE OBSTACLES IN THEIR QUEST FOR BETTER LIVES.

BUT INSTEAD OF DEPENDING SOLELY UPON GOVERNMENT AID,  
THE CENTER FINDS ITS OWN MEANS TO HELP BETTER THEIR  
CIRCUMSTANCES. THAT IS A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION THAT  
PART OF THE CENTURIES-OLD NOBLE HERITAGE OF THE AMERICAN  
INDIAN HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO THE CITY.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN  
CENTER AND THANK YOU FOR THE SILVER EAGLE-FEATHER AWARD.

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